



Requirements for the Standard Professional Moderate/Severe Disabilities Certificate – Grade K-12

Certificate Information:

This Certificate authorizes the holder to teach in a moderate/severe disabilities classroom in grade K-12 as documented by student needs in the individualized education program and the following categories, including autism, moderate/severe intellectual disabilities, traumatic brain injury, emotional disability, specific learning disability, orthopedic impairments, developmental delay and/or other health impairments. Approved areas and endorsements may be added to this certificate. This certificate is valid for 12 years and is renewable.

Administrative Requirement Checklist:

In order for our office to complete a Substantive review the following Administrative requirements must be submitted as described, if not, the processing of your application could be delayed. Application fees are non-refundable.

- Application & Fee:** Complete the [Application for Certification](#) and submit the appropriate fee.
- IVP Fingerprint Card:** Submit a photocopy of your valid [Arizona Department of Public Safety](#) Identity Verified Prints (IVP) fingerprint card, (not the paper copy of your prints), with your application.
- Official Transcripts:** Request that your university/college submit official transcripts documenting a Bachelor's degree or more advanced degree directly to certification@azed.gov, or by mail to Arizona Department of Education – Certification Unit, P.O. Box 6490, Phoenix, AZ 85005.
- Foreign Transcripts:** Request a course-by-course evaluation completed by an approved [Foreign Credential Evaluation Agency](#) to identify the equivalent degree in the United States, and submit them directly to certification@azed.gov.
 - *Note:* Transcripts submitted by the applicant via the online portal or by email are not considered official.

--One of the following--

- Exams:** Copy of your passing AEPA/NEA exam results or appropriate documentation that you qualify for an exam waiver. (See Exam Requirements). If you are using teaching experience, please have your HR complete the [Verification of PreK-12 Teaching Experience](#) form and submitted by the HR Department to certification@azed.gov.

--OR--

- Out-of-State Certificate/License:** Submit a photocopy of your out-of-state certificate/license with your application.

Substantive Requirement – Coursework

Options A, B, or C

Option A: Teacher Preparation Program:

- Completion of a teacher preparation program in Moderate/Severe Disabilities Special Education from a Board-approved educator preparation program or from an accredited institution offering substantially similar training, addressing the topics listed below and any others as required by law: Research-based systematic phonics; Research-based instructional strategies for delivering differentiated reading instruction, assessment, intervention and remediation to support readers of varying ages and ability levels, including students with dyslexia; Instructional design and lesson planning, including specially designed instruction; The learning environment, including classroom and individual behavioral management; Instructional delivery, facilitation and methodologies for teaching research-based instruction in math and English language arts; Legal aspects of special education, including individualized education programs and transition planning; Effective collaboration and communication practices, including modifications and accommodations; Adaptive communication, including language



Requirements for the Standard Professional Moderate/Severe Disabilities Certificate – Grade K-12

development and disorders; Assessment and eligibility, including monitoring and reporting requirements; Professional responsibility and ethical conduct; Twelve weeks of capstone experience as described in R7-2-604 in special education in moderate to severe moderate/severe disabilities grades K through 12, which may be completed during the valid period of a teaching intern certificate.

- *Required Documentation:* Official transcripts or an Arizona Institutional Recommendation (IR) documenting completion of the teacher preparation program.
- Completion of the United States and Arizona Constitution coursework from an accredited institution or the Constitution of the United States and Arizona exam, AZ033. (This is an allowable 3-year deficiency. *)
 - *Required Documentation:* Official transcripts submitted to Certification@azed.gov from your institution or a photocopy of the official NES/AEPA score report.

Option B: Teaching Experience and Coursework/Training. Both B-1 & B-2 are required.

- **B-1 - Teaching Experience:** Two (2) years of full-time teaching experience in Moderate/Severe Special Education.
 - *Required Documentation:* A [Verification of Teaching Experience](#) form, completed and signed by the school Superintendent or Personnel/HR director, verifying completion of the required teaching experience.

-AND-

- **B-2 - Coursework:** Completion of Board approved or accredited coursework or trainings which teach the knowledge and skills described in Arizona Administrative Code R7-2-602 and address the following topics:
 - Research-based systematic phonics;
 - Research-based instructional strategies for delivering differentiated reading instruction, assessment, intervention, and remediation to support readers of varying ages and ability levels, including students with dyslexia;
 - Instructional design and lesson planning, including specially designed instruction;
 - The learning environment, including classroom and individual behavioral management;
 - Instructional delivery, facilitation, and methodologies for teaching research-based instruction in math and English language arts;
 - Legal aspects of special education, including individualized education programs and transition planning;
 - Effective collaboration and communication practices, including modifications and accommodations;
 - Adaptive communication, including language development and disorders;
 - Assessment and eligibility, including monitoring and reporting requirements;
 - Professional responsibility and ethical conduct;
 - Professional responsibility and ethical conduct; (This is an allowable 3-year deficiency*.)
 - *Required Documentation:* Official transcripts submitted to certification@azed.gov by your university/college.
 - Completion of the United States and Arizona Constitution coursework from an accredited institution OR the Constitution of the United States and Arizona exam, AZ033. (This is an allowable 3-year deficiency. *)
 - *Required Documentation:* Official transcripts submitted to Certification@azed.gov by your institution or a photocopy of the official NES/AEPA score report

Option C: Out-of-State Certification.

- The applicant holds a valid, comparable Moderate/Severe Disabilities Special Education teaching certificate from another state and is in good standing with that other state. Applicants who qualify under this option are not required to meet the exam requirements listed under exam requirements.
 - *Required Documentation:* A photocopy of the valid, comparable teaching certificate from another state.



Requirements for the Standard Professional Moderate/Severe Disabilities Certificate – Grade K-12

- Completion of the United States and Arizona Constitution coursework from an accredited institution or the Constitution of the United States and Arizona exam, AZ033. (This is an allowable 3-year deficiency. *)
 - *Required Documentation:* Official transcripts submitted to Certification@azed.gov from your institution or a photocopy of the official NES or AEPA score report

***Allowable Deficiencies:**

- If you otherwise qualify but are deficient in the **Phonics, Dyslexia, and/or Ethics** requirements, you have three years from the issuance of the certificate to fulfill these requirements. If you are unable to fulfill one or more of these requirements within the allowable timeframe, the certificate will be placed on a non-disciplinary suspension until the deficiency is corrected.
- If you otherwise qualify but are deficient in the **United States and/or Arizona Constitution** requirements you have 1 or 3 years from the issuance of the certificate to fulfill these requirements. If you are unable to fulfill one or more of these requirements within the allowable timeframe, the certificate will be placed on a non-disciplinary suspension until the deficiency is corrected.

Substantive Requirements – Exams:

Professional Knowledge Exam Requirement. One of the following (Option A, B, C, or D):

- **Option A - NES/AEPA:** A passing score on the [APEA/NES](#) Special Education: Severely and Profoundly Disabled (AZ030) Exam
 - *Required Documentation:* A photocopy of the official AEPA or NES score report.
- **Option B - Out of State Exam:** Passing score on a substantially similar professional knowledge exam from another state.
 - *Required Documentation:* Submit an official score report and have reporting state complete and submit [Verification of Out of State Exams](#). (If you took a Praxis exam, request that your scores be reported to the state of Arizona 8517, in place of the Verification of Out of State Exam form.)
- **Option C - NBPTS:** A valid comparable certificate from the National Board for Professional Teaching Standards (NBPTS).
 - *Required Documentation:* A photocopy of the NBPTS certificate.
- **Option D - Teaching Experience:** Three years of full-time teaching experience in any state, including Arizona, in Moderate/Severe Disabilities Special Education K-12. Note: teaching in a foreign school or substitute experience does not meet this requirement.
 - *Required Documentation:* A [Verification of Teaching Experience](#) form, completed, signed, and submitted by the District Superintendent or Personnel/HR Director, to certification@azed.gov, verifying the required teaching experience.

-AND-

Subject Knowledge Exam Requirement. One of the following (Option A, B, C, D, E, F, or G):

- **Option A - AEPA/NES:** A passing score on the AEPA/NES Subject Knowledge: Elementary Education Subtest I & II exam.
 - *Required Documentation:* A photocopy of the passing score report.
- **Option B - Out-of-State Exam:** Passing score on a substantially similar subject knowledge exam from another state.
 - *Required Documentation:* Submit an official score report and have reporting state complete and submit [Verification of Out of State Exams](#). (If you took a Praxis exam, request that your scores be reported to the state of Arizona 8517, in place of the Verification of Out of State Exam form.)
- **Option C - NBPTS:** A valid comparable certificate from the National Board for Professional Teaching Standards.



Requirements for the Standard Professional Moderate/Severe Disabilities Certificate – Grade K-12

- *Required Documentation:* A photocopy of the NBPTS certificate.
- **Option D - Degree in the Subject:** A Bachelor's, Master's, or Doctorate degree in Moderate/Severe Disabilities Special Education from an accredited institution.
 - *Required Documentation:* Official transcripts documenting the degree.
- **Option E - Teaching Experience:** Verification of three years of full-time teaching experience in any state, including Arizona, in a Moderate/Severe Disabilities Special Education or in a self-contained K-8 classroom.
Note: Experience teaching in a foreign school and substitute work does not meet this requirement.
 - *Required Documentation:* A [Verification of Teaching Experience](#) form, completed and signed by the District Superintendent or Personnel/HR Director verifying the required teaching experience.
- **Option F - Post-Secondary Teaching:** Experience teaching courses relevant to Moderate/Severe Disabilities Special Education or Elementary Education for the last two consecutive years and for a total of at least three years, at one or more regionally or nationally accredited postsecondary institutions.
 - *Required Documentation:* A letter(s) from the college or university Department Chair, Dean, or Personnel Director, verifying postsecondary teaching experience for the specified durations.
- **Option G - Work Experience:** Demonstration of expertise in Moderate/Severe Disabilities Special Education or
 - **Required Documentation.** One of the following:
 - A letter, on official letterhead, from a superintendent or personnel director verifying that the applicant demonstrates knowledge or skill in the subject area that is comparable to holding a bachelor's degree, master's degree, or doctoral degree in that subject area through five years of work experience, as identified in a resume; **or**
 - A letter, on official letterhead, from a public or private school superintendent or personnel director in this state or in another state, verifying that the applicant has five years of experience teaching the most advanced Arizona academic standards, or comparable out-of-state standards, in the subject area sought; **or**
 - If an applicant is unable to obtain a letter from a superintendent or personnel director described above, the applicant may submit a letter (on official company letterhead) from a current or former supervisor detailing their work experience. The Department will review the letter to determine if the applicant has five years of work experience that demonstrates knowledge and skills in the requested subject area that is comparable to holding a bachelor's degree, masters degree, or doctoral degree in that subject area.

Pursuant to section 41-1093.01, Arizona Revised Statutes, an agency shall limit all occupational regulations to regulations that are demonstrated to be necessary to specifically fulfill a public health, safety, or welfare concern. Pursuant to sections 41-1093.02 and 41-1093.03, Arizona Revised Statutes, you have the right to petition this agency to repeal or modify the occupational regulation or bring an action in a court of general jurisdiction to challenge the occupational regulation and to ensure compliance with section 41-1093.01, Arizona Revised Statutes